

NEWS RELEASE

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Grand Jury Charges Two California Residents with Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute Cocaine

Rock Island, IL- Rodger A. Heaton, United States Attorney for the Central District of Illinois, announced that a federal grand jury charged two California residents with conspiring to possess with intent to distribute and possession with intent to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine.

Alfredo Romero Cisneros, age 27, of Mission Hill, California, and Karla Franco, 25, of Pacoima, California, were previously charged in a criminal complaint filed October 12, 2006. The affidavit filed in support of the complaint alleges that on October 9, 2006, at approximately 2:46 p.m., Cisneros was driving eastbound on Interstate 80 in Henry county, Illinois when an Illinois State Police trooper stopped the vehicle for a traffic violation. The trooper subsequently determined that Cisneros had a suspended driver's license. According to the affidavit, after a canine alerted to the trunk of the vehicle, troopers located approximately six kilograms of cocaine wrapped in a blanket and hidden under a spare tire.

Both defendants are currently in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service. If convicted, each offense is punishable by a maximum statutory penalty of 10 years to life in prison and a fine of up to \$4,000,000.

The charges are the result of an investigation by the Illinois State Police and Drug Enforcement Administration. Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew Cannon is prosecuting the case.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; the defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

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